

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising:
an image carrier on which a toner image is to be formed; ~~and~~
a recording medium support member configured to convey a ~~the~~ recording medium,
carrying the toner image thereon, in cooperation with said image carrier; and
a voltage applying device interposed between a surface of said image carrier and a
surface of the recording medium and configured to apply a voltage identical in polarity with a
toner,

wherein said image carrier and said recording medium support member are driven
such that the ~~the~~ [[a]] surface of said image carrier and the ~~the~~ [[a]] surface of said recording medium
support member move in a same direction as each other, as seen at a contact position where
the surfaces contact ~~face~~ each other via the recording medium,

said voltage applying device is positioned upstream of the contact position in a
direction of movement of said recording medium, and

an electric field, forcing the toner image toward said image carrier, and an electric
field, forcing said toner image toward the recording medium, are formed between the surface
of said image carrier and the surface of said recording medium at positions upstream and
downstream, respectively, of the contact position in a direction of movement of said
recording medium.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 15 ~~15~~ [[2]], wherein
said recording medium support member comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers,

and said first voltage applying device and said second voltage applying device comprise rollers.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 15 ~~[[2]]~~, wherein said recording medium support member comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying device and said second voltage applying device each comprises ~~comprise~~ a brush.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 15 ~~[[2]]~~, wherein said recording medium support member comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying device and said second voltage applying device each comprises ~~comprise~~ a blade.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 15 ~~[[2]]~~, wherein said recording medium support member comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying device and said second voltage applying device comprise a combination of two of a roller, a brush and a blade.

Claims 7-14 (Canceled).

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising: ~~The apparatus as claimed in claim 14, further comprising:~~

an image carrier on which a toner image is to be formed; and
a recording medium support member configured to convey a recording medium,
carrying the toner image thereon, in cooperation with said image carrier;

a first voltage applying device; and

a second voltage applying device,

wherein said image carrier and said recording medium support member are driven such that the surface of said image carrier and the surface of said recording medium support member move in a same direction as each other, as seen at a contact position where the surfaces contact each other via the recording medium,

said image carrier comprises an intermediate image transfer body to which toner images are sequentially transferred one above the other to complete a composite image,

[[a]] said first voltage applying device is configured to apply a voltage opposite in polarity to a the toner to part of a reverse surface of said intermediate image transfer body upstream of a contact position where said intermediate image transfer body and the recording medium contact each other in a direction of movement of a surface of said intermediate image transfer body, and

[[a]] said second voltage applying device is configured to apply a voltage identical in polarity to the toner to part of the reverse surface of said intermediate image transfer body positioned at or downstream of the contact position in the direction of movement of said surface, and

an electric field, forcing the toner image toward said image carrier, and an electric field, forcing said toner image toward the recording medium, are formed between the surface of said image carrier and the surface of said recording medium at positions upstream and downstream, respectively, of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium.

Claim 16 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said intermediate image transfer body comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying device and said second voltage applying device comprise rollers.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said intermediate image transfer body comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying device and said second voltage applying device each comprises ~~comprise~~ a brush.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said intermediate image transfer body comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying device and said second voltage applying device each comprises ~~comprise~~ a blade.

Claim 19 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said intermediate image transfer body comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying device and said second voltage applying device comprise a combination of two of a roller, a brush and a blade.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising:
image carrier means on which a toner image is to be formed; and
recording medium support means for conveying ~~a~~ the recording medium, carrying the toner image thereon, in cooperation with said image carrier means; and
voltage applying means interposed between a surface of said image carrier means and a surface of the recording medium,

wherein said image carrier means and said recording medium support means are driven such that the ~~the~~ [[a]] surface of said image carrier means and the ~~the~~ [[a]] surface of said recording medium support means move in a same direction as each other, as seen at a contact position where the surfaces contact ~~face~~ each other via the recording medium,

said voltage applying means for applying a voltage identical in polarity with a toner are positioned upstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium, and

an electric field, forcing the toner image toward said image carrier means, and an electric field, forcing said toner image toward the recording medium, are formed between the surface of said image carrier means and the surface of said recording medium at positions upstream and downstream, respectively, of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium.

Claim 21 (Canceled).

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 34 ~~21~~, wherein said recording medium support means comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying means and said second voltage applying means comprise rollers.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 34 ~~21~~, wherein said recording medium support means comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying means and said second voltage applying means each comprises ~~comprise~~ a brush.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~34~~ 24, wherein said recording medium support means comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying means and said second voltage applying means each comprises ~~comprise~~ a blade.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim ~~34~~ 24, wherein said recording medium support means comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying means and said second voltage applying means comprise a combination of two of a roller, a brush and a blade.

Claims 26-33 (Canceled).

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising: The apparatus as claimed in claim 33, further comprising:

image carrier means on which a toner image is to be formed;

recording medium support means for conveying a recording medium, carrying the toner image thereon, in cooperation with said image carrier means;

first voltage applying means; and

second voltage applying means,

wherein said image carrier means and said recording medium support means are driven such that a surface of said image carrier means and a surface of said recording medium support means move in a same direction as each other, as seen at a contact position where the surfaces contact each other via the recording medium,

said image carrier means comprises an intermediate image transfer body to which toner images are sequentially transferred one above the other to complete a composite image,

said first voltage applying means for applying a voltage opposite in polarity to the a toner to part of a reverse surface of said intermediate image transfer body are positioned upstream of the [[a]] contact position ~~where said intermediate image transfer body and said recording medium support means contact each other~~ in a direction of movement of a surface of said intermediate image transfer body; ~~and~~

said second voltage applying means for applying a voltage identical in polarity to the toner to part of the reverse surface of said intermediate image transfer body are positioned at or downstream of the contact position in the direction of movement of said surface, and

an electric field, forcing the toner image toward said image carrier means, and an electric field, forcing said toner image toward the recording medium, are formed between the surface of said image carrier means and the surface of said recording medium at positions upstream and downstream, respectively, of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium.

Claim 35 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, wherein said intermediate image transfer body comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying means and said second voltage applying means comprise rollers.

Claim 36 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, wherein said intermediate image transfer body comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying means and said second voltage applying means each comprises ~~comprise~~ a brush.

Claim 37 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, wherein said intermediate image transfer body comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said

first voltage applying means and said second voltage applying means each comprises
~~comprise~~ a blade.

Claim 38 (Original): The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, wherein said intermediate image transfer body comprises a belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and said first voltage applying means and said second voltage applying means comprise a combination of two of a roller, a brush and a blade.

Claim 39 (Currently Amended): An image forming method comprising the steps of:
forming a toner image on an image carrier;
causing said image carrier and a recording medium support member to convey the recording medium, carrying the toner image thereon, by nipping said recording medium;
driving said image carrier and said recording medium support member such that a surface of said image carrier and a surface of said recording medium support member move in a same direction as each other, as seen at a contact position where the surfaces contact ~~face~~ each other via the recording medium; and
applying a voltage to a device interposed between a surface of said image carrier and a surface of the recording medium configured identical in polarity with the toner, said device located at a position upstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium ~~forming an electric field, which forces the toner image toward said image carrier, and an electric field, which forces said toner image toward the recording medium, between the surface of said image carrier and the surface of said recording medium at positions upstream and downstream, respectively, of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium.~~

Claim 40 (New): An image forming apparatus comprising:

- an image carrier on which a toner image is to be formed; and
- a recording medium support member configured to convey a recording medium, carrying the toner image thereon, in cooperation with said image carrier;
- a first voltage applying device;
- a second voltage applying device; and
- a third voltage applying device,

wherein said image carrier and said recording medium support member are driven such that the surface of said image carrier and the surface of said recording medium support member move in a same direction as each other, as seen at a contact position where the surfaces contact each other via the recording medium,

said first voltage applying device is configured to apply a voltage opposite in polarity to a toner to part of a reverse surface of said image carrier upstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium,

said second voltage applying device is configured to apply a voltage identical in polarity to the toner to part of the reverse surface of said recording medium support member at or upstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium, and

said third voltage applying device is configured to apply a ground voltage to part of the reverse surface of said recording medium support member at or downstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium.

Claim 41 (New): An image forming apparatus comprising:

- image carrier means on which a toner image is to be formed;

recording medium support means for conveying a recording medium, carrying the toner image thereon, in cooperation with said image carrier means;

first voltage applying means;

second voltage applying means; and

third voltage applying means,

wherein said image carrier means and said recording medium support means are driven such that a surface of said image carrier means and a surface of said recording medium support means move in a same direction as each other, as seen at a contact position where the surfaces contact each other via the recording medium,

said first voltage applying means for applying a voltage opposite in polarity to a toner to part of a reverse surface of said image carrier are positioned upstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium;

said second voltage applying means for applying a voltage identical in polarity to the toner to part of the reverse surface of said recording medium support means are positioned at or upstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium, and

said third voltage applying means for applying a ground voltage to part of the reverse surface of said recording medium support means are positioned at or downstream of the contact position in a direction of movement of said recording medium.